

REMARKS

This patent application includes Claims 1-31, of which Claims 1-26 were rejected and Claims 27-31 are newly added. Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as indefinite. Specifically, the examiner indicated that it was improper to include a broad limitation and a narrow limitation for the same feature in a single claim.

In response, Claims 1, 5, 8, 10 and 12 have been amended to delete the narrow limitation. Thus, the rejections of Claims 1-12 and 14-26 under 35 U.S.C. §112 should be withdrawn. Claims 27-30, independent claims, have been added to cover the narrower limitations.

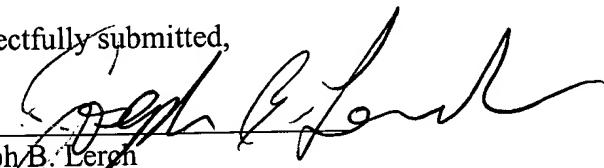
Claim 13 was rejected as indefinite for the use of the terms lower and higher without providing a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree. As amended, Claim 13 recites that the treatment gases conveyed from a first stage having a first temperature to a second stage of a higher temperature than the first temperature. This is believed to be clear and concise and, accordingly, the rejection of Claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §112 should be withdrawn.

For the reasons explained above, all rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112 should now be withdrawn. Inasmuch as all rejections over prior art have been overcome and have been withdrawn by the examiner, Claims 1-26 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 27-31 depend from allowed claims and are believed to be allowable based upon their dependence from an allowable claim. Accordingly, all claims are now in condition for allowance.

Applicant's attorney has made every effort to place this patent application in condition for allowance. It is therefore earnestly requested that the present amendment be entered, that this application, as a whole, receive favorable reconsideration and that all of the claims be allowed as presently constituted. Should there remain any unanswered questions, the examiner is requested to call the applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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